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a script from KCBS

Jane Taylor

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VISIT TO USS HAVEN:

I made a visit earlier this week to a kind of historic symbol...a modern symbol, though it's historic at the same time. This is the Navy Hospital ship, the Haven. The Haven is the sister ship of the ill-fated Benevolence. During World War II she was constantly concerned with getting the wounded home from many areas in the Pacific.

Now the Hospital Ship is assigned to carrying the wounded home from Korea and Japan. She's had four teen continuous months of this duty, and at the moment is tied up at Pier 7 here in San Francisco, And her staff of doctors, corpsmen, and nurses have begun a well-deserved leave. The ship, itself, though, will not lie idle. Groups of student nurses have been invited to come a-board and look her over, from stem to stern, while she's in port. And the visit I made was in the company of such nurses. There were student nurses from Franklin Hospital, and graduate nurses from Merritt over in Oakland.

Several hundred of them, all told, But the group I went along with was small...only four of us....which meant that we could get a close look at everything, and ask more questions of our guide, a Navy Nurse with the grade of Lt. Junior Grade....Miss Elsie Lovely.

We saw various sized wards, containing from twenty-six to fifty beds in two tiers...each bed with its own radio, by the way. We saw the pharmacy, the central supply room with its two sterilizers and cupboards full of dressings...the clinical laboratory, which handles chemistries, bacteriologies, pathologies... ...the medical library...and then spent some time in the surgeries. There are three operating rooms, situated in the center of the ship where there is least motion...and one anaesthetizing room. Then there's a dental section, with its three chairs practically in constant use--for patients and crew members, too. And an eye, ear, nose and throat clinic, an optical laboratory, a physio-therapy room, and a basal metabolism laboratory. It was evident that the Haven was a real hospital, with nothing lacking. They even have an iron lung. And, of course, an important piece of equipment is their litter hoist...they also have several types of litter to carry patients on, aboard the ship.

There's a staff of thirty-five doctors, most of them specialists, and twenty-six nurses, besides the medical corpsmen who do the greater part of the actual work with the wounded.

Our guide, Miss Lovely, was one of the original nurses assigned to the Haven, and before she left us to watch the swearing-in ceremony of a new Navy Nurse, she told me a little about a subject very dear to my heart....Christmas At Sea. The Haven had spent last Christmas tied up at Inchon. She said that that was the most important day of the past year, to everyone aboard ship. The crewman had obtained trees from goodness knows where, and installed them in every ward, they had all made decorations, and then there had been a dinner with all the fixings.

So, regardless of how complete the facilities are for giving our men what they need aboard ship....and they certainly are complete.....a present under this tree is still lacking.

You know this already, though, and you're sending more and more proof of it every day, with the gifts that are coming into the srudio here at KCBS. Now if more and more of them can keep coming, we may make the goal. 10 to 15 thousand gifts is a great, great many...but that's the number of men who'll be out in the Pacific instead of home where they want to be.....on Christmas Day.

And believe me, they'll be deeply touched by your remembrance of them...any gift, large or small, will be very welcome...a number of different food packages have come in and there can never be too many of these.

The men are always hungry for a little extra something, like fruit cake, cookies, candies, nuts...baked in tin containers, to keep well, And canned delicatssen items, like fish, olives, pickles, and so on. Then there are such thing^s as pocket-size books, game sets, playing cards...anything for entertainment.

Sent the gifts to CHRISTMAS AT SEA, CARE OF JANE TODD, KCBS, PALACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO 5. You can gift-wrap them yourself and enclose a card, or leave it up to the staff at KCBS. The Military Sea Transportation Service, Pacific, will deliver them in time for Christmas. I hope you'll send them gifts soon to CHRISTMAS AT SEA, CARE OF JANE TODD, KCBS, PALACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO 5.